

[20 March, 2001]

RAJYA SABHA

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS
(SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) No, Sir.

(b) to (d) Do not arise in view of (a) above.

VPTs in Bihar

†2604. SHRIMATI KUM KUM RAI: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of village panchayats in Bihar where telephones have been installed so far;

(b) whether Government are contemplating to connect each village of the State with telephone facility;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the effective steps taken by Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS
(SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) 5,286 village panchayats in Bihar have been provided with telecom facility.

(b) to (d) 15,496 villages in Bihar have already been provided with telecom facility by February, 2001. Government has planned to provide telecom facility in all the remaining villages by March, 2002. New technologies like CDOT TDMA/PMP and Wireless in Local Loop (WLL) are being inducted in the rural network to achieve the targets.

Convergence Bill

2605. SHRI K. RAMA MOHANA RAO: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) by when Government are going to bring in before the Parliament the Convergence Bill to bring IT-related issues under one roof; and

(b) in what manner it will help in clearing the proposals through single window?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS
(SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) and (b) The Report of the Group on Telecom & IT

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

Convergence, which is considering the proposed draft of the Communication Convergence Bill, is awaited.

The draft of the Bill *inter alia* envisages the establishment of a single autonomous and statutory body to be known as the Communications Commission of India to regulate the carriage and content of communications (including telecommunications, broadcasting and multimedia). As per the proposals contained in the draft Bill, the Commission would *inter alia* be empowered to issue licences, determine licence fees and tariffs for licensed services, allot spectrum, facilitate competition, protect consumer interests, etc.

Rectification of Bijanbari Exchanges, Darjeeling

2606. SHRI DAWA LAMA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that 60 Exchanges of Bijanbari, Darjeeling can hardly be accessed from outside; and

(b) if so, the action proposed to be taken for getting the defects rectified permanently?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) Sir, there is only one Exchange working at present with Level "60" at Bijanbari, Darjeeling. Due to certain problem in the Exchange/Transmission media, the accessibility of this Exchange from outside is affected.

(b) In order to overcome this problem, the work of setting up 1000 Lines CDOT Exchange at Bijanbari, Darjeeling along with STD connectivity by Digital Microwave Link to Darjeeling is under progress and is likely to be completed by 31.03.2001, subject to availability of Electrical power, to ensure smooth access in both ways.

Appointment of Chief Post Master General for Manipur Nagaland and Mizoram

2607. SHRI W. ANGOU SINGH: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have any plan to keep a Chief Post Master General for Manipur, Nagaland and Mizoram separate from Shillong;